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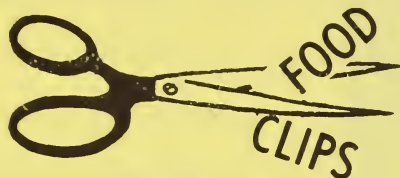
# Food and Home Notes

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
OFFICE OF COMMUNICATION WASHINGTON, D. C.

Vol. 32

July 28, 1975

No. 30



## In This Issue:

- 1 - The Bicentennial  
— and School Lunch
- 2 - Fields of Corn — and Flowers
- 3 - It's a Nutty Story
- 4 - The Top Banana

Cutting boards, wood utensils, and wooden work surfaces need special treatment to keep spoilage bacteria under control. Scrape surfaces if necessary; scrub with soapy water and rinse well with boiling water. Then disinfect clean surfaces (a liquid chlorine disinfectant - household laundry bleach--will do the job).

\* \* \*

Be alert for signs of spoilage in canned meats. Bulging jar lids or rings, gas bubbles, leaks, bulging can ends -- these may mean the seal was broken and the meat has spoiled. (You may test a can by pressing the ends; ends should not bulge or snap back).

\* \* \*

If you wash lettuce, celery, and other leafy vegetables before storing, drain thoroughly because too much moisture can hasten decay warns USDA home economists.

\* \* \*

Lentils may be cooked without soaking-- just add one teaspoon of salt to the cooking water for each cup of lentils. Cover, boil gently until done.

\* \* \*

Nearly all fats from plant sources are unsaturatrated; except coconut oil.

## \*\*\*SPECIAL NEWS FEATURE\*\*\*

The enclosed slick reproducible is the second in a series of special features prepared by the Extension Service of USDA. Comments from Editors are requested.

## CHILD NUTRITION

### And the Bicentennial

"The First Thanksgiving", "A Colonial Christmas" and the "Boston Tea Party". All will be highlighted during the coming year in the National School Lunch Program as Bicentennial themes are used in planning. Participating schools will receive special recognition awards for their originality in celebrating the 200 years of America and 30 years of school lunch programs.

The American Revolution Bicentennial Administration has approved the plan for the Child Nutrition Bicentennial Project in which the U.S. Department of Agriculture, State Departments of Education, and the American School Food Services Association are cooperating. The project is planned for 18 months-- July 1975 through December 1976 with a broad range of activities to encourage nutrition education and school lunch participation.

## IN THE CORN CROP



Dr. Robert Eplee, supervisor of U.S. Department of Agriculture's Witchweed Methods Development Laboratory in Whiteville, N.C., is shown examining the effects of the parasitic witchweed on corn.

— THE FLOWER WE DON'T NEED  
—— Witchweed

As you're driving down a highway lined with fields of corn in North or South Carolina you may see a pretty little "flower" that blooms with red, or sometimes yellow, from mid-July until the first frost. It grows about 8 to 10 inches tall and attaches itself to corn, sorghum, sugarcane and similar plants with octopus-like roots that suck food and water from its host...it's called "witchweed".

One witchweed plant may produce up to 500,000 seeds in a single growing season. The seeds can lie dormant (yet viable) up to eight years. It's such a tricky weed that even if a man walked in an infested field, he'd probably get witchweed seeds on his shoes or in his pant cuffs. If he visited another field--he'd spread the seeds into the whole area.

Fortunately, it has not been found outside of the Carolinas, but the U.S. Department of Agriculture Witchweed Methods Development Laboratory in North Carolina examines effects of the parasitic witchweed on corn and USDA scientists are working on control methods.



## WHERE DID ALL THE NUTS GO?

Remember when those sticky buns with pecans actually were full of pecans...every bite of a praline uncovered a tasty chewy nut..and walnut cake really had lots of walnuts in it? Most of the bakery products don't taste like they did in the "good old days". Due to the higher prices of sugar, flour, other baking ingredients, and the total process, manufacturers of bakery products have felt the need to cut back on the amount of nuts that go into many of their products according to USDA's Economic Research Service situation report.

However--nut production is hitting record highs. We have more pecans, walnuts, almonds and filberts than ever before-- a record crop of 443,800 tons. And, the \$400 million - plus tree nut industry doesn't want consumers to forget about nuts. They're advertising and promoting to try to off-set the cut-back in bakery products usage, which, in most cases was part of their major market.

Imaginative ways to use nuts in cooking and entertaining-- and the nutritive value of nuts in the diet--are being pointed up by the industry to highlight the campaign. Foreign buyers, cereal manufacturers, mail order houses.all outlets are being considered.

The almond industry has been one of the most successful with new market areas. You can find almonds in nearly everything from your favorite natural cereals, to soup and frozen vegetables. More than 95 percent of the almond crop is sold shelled -- and over half of our shelled almonds are now exported,(compared to under 10% of just a few years ago).



## Nuts -2

Though the bakeries used to be the biggest buyers of pecans - they aren't anymore. However, the gift packs and mail order sales and other confectionery users are still maintaining strong markets. Many pecans are also exported now.

Traditional markets for walnuts are down here, but they, too, have found a foreign trade market. The Filbert industry has remained stable and Macadamia nuts from Hawaii are popular...still being served primarily as a snack.

One relative newcomer to the domestic scene is the pistachio nut. It's now being grown successfully in California. Prior to this, most of our pistachios came from Turkey and the Mediterreanean area. The domestic pistachio is now finding a good market here in many areas from the regular "eat out of hand" salted variety to the frozen desserts, icecream uses. It's expected to be a growing market if present demands are an indication. Many people from Southern European countries seem to seek out the pistachio as their favorite.

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## NAME YOUR FAVORITE FRESH FRUIT

Bananas are the top fruit in per capital consumption. Even though consumers apparently restrict banana purchases when the price goes up. Last year, consumers purchased nearly 19 pounds, per capita, the most since 1969. Actual figures for the three top favorites are: 18.7 pounds for bananas, 15.7 pounds for apples and 14.8 pounds for oranges, according to figures from the Economic Research Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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FOOD AND HOME NOTES is published weekly for distribution to the PRESS and to others who report directly to the public. It is not available to individual consumers or for mass distribution. Shirley Wagener, Editor of Food and Home Notes, Office of Communication, Room 535-A U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Telephone 202-447-5898.

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